Discrimination against Indian citizens in Fiji

2388. PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA:
DR. RATNAKAR PANDEY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a lot of discrimination against Indian citizens in Fiji under the new Rulers especially in the Trade Union Sector; and

(b) if so, what are the details of diplomatic steps taken to get justice to the citizens of Indian origin in that country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) The professed aim of the military coups in Fiji has been to guarantee political supermacy to the indigenous Melanesians. The regime in Fiji is understood to be working on a Constitution towards achieving that goal however, the Constitution is yet to be finalized.

(b) India has strongly condemned the military coups and raised the matter at United Nations General Assembly and the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting at Vancouver last year. At CHOGM, India played a leading role in the deliberations on Fiji which resulted in the lapse of Fiji's membership of the Commonwealth. We have taken the position that to regain its membership, Fiji would have to adhere to Commonwealth principles which forbid racial discrimination.

Initiatives to reduce the regional imbalances in availability of resources

2389. SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission has taken any initiative to reduce the regional imbalances inavailability of resources;

(b) whether it is a fact that the richer States are able to avail of larger assisance per capita on account of their ability to provide matching grants;

(c) in view of this, whether the Planning Commission is aware of the fact that the combined amount transferred through Gadgil formula and Centrally sponsored schemes; became regressive; and

(d) if so, whether Planning Commission propose to undertake a review of the situation to explore the possibility of making the transfer of resources more liberal to the poorer States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI BIREN SINGH ENGTI): (a) to (c) Present formula for transfer of resources from the Centre to the Special Category States and the non-Special Category States aims at reducing the regional imbalances in resources. In the case of special Category States like Arunachal Pradesh,, Manipur, Maghalaya etc., having very little resources of their own, the entire difference between their approved plan outlay and their resources is met by Central Assistance. The Central Assistance is provided at the rate of 90% grant and 10% loan. For the non-Special Category States, Central Assistance is provided on the basis of 70% loan and 30% grant. It is governed by Modified Gadgil Formula, distribution criteria of which is as follows:

(i) 60% on the basis of 1971 population.

(ii) 20% among those States whose per capita income is below the national average.

(iii) 10% on the basis of per capita tax effort.

(iv) 10% keeping in view special problems of States.

It will be seen from the above that formula of Central Assistance tries to reduce the regional imbalances in availability of resources. This is also reflected by the percentage of Central Assistance to plan utlay in respect of the States for the year 1987-88, as is given in the Annexure. (*See* Appendix CXLV, Annexure No. 88].

(d) At present, no review proposal is under consideration.

Revsion of the Gadgil formula

2390. SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to revise the Gadgil formula in view of the inequitous impact of the 'Tax effort' criterion and population criterion for Central assistance to the State Plans;

(b) whether it is a fact that the poor States are penalised on account of their low tax-income ratio, and whether this considerably neutralises the progressivity of the formula; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that by adopting 1971 population base, less developed States are paid less assistance for their lower level of social and economic development, resulting from their weaker resources position and what is the way out of this vicious circle?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI BIREN SINGH ENGTI): (a) No proposal is under consideration at present to revise the Modified Gadgil Formula as approved by the N.D.C.

(b) The distribution of Central assistance under the Modified Gadgil Formula is determined on the basis of population (60%), tax effort (10%), per capita income below the national average (20%) and special problems (10%). Taking an integrated view, the formula is weighted in favour of the less developed States.

(c) In terms of the Government of India's Policy on Family Welfare Programme, 1971 population has been adopted in the case of all the States for determining the allocation under 'population' factor. By adopting 1971 population base, in general the States having per capita income below the national average have got relatively larger share than that if it had been computed on the basis of 1981 population.

17th December as Pensioners' day

2391. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what decisions have been taken for the welfare of the pensioners;

(b) whether standing Committee of voluntary agencies is being proposed to be reorganised; and

(c) whether there is any proposal to observe the 17th December as Pensioners' day every year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) A statement is annexed (See below).

(b) The Standing Committee of Voluntary Agencies was reconstituted on 10-2-1988.

(c) No, Sir.

Statement

Measures for welfare of pensioners

1. A separate Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare was set up in March, 1985 to provide the necessary focal point to deal with pension policy and pensioners' grievances.